

Where there was no equality in the state and where the laws favored one group, it became natural for the Boers to take the law into their hands in dealing with the African. As a result of this, a tradition grew up that entitled the white man to beat up an African if he became "cheeky." It was not uncommon on Boer farms for people to be tied to wheels and flayed with thongs until blood flowed down their backs. My own father had so much of this treatment on a Boer farm near Ladysmith that he fled from home, never to return to his people again. The conclusion must not be drawn from this, however, that every Boer was a monster in human form in his dealings with the Africans. There were some very decent men and women who never made their impact felt on the life of the community. They were always few, always afraid of being labeled *kaffer-boeties* (niggers' brothers), and consequently, ostracized.

The wars that culminated in the collapse of the first republic, instead of shocking the Afrikaners into a new understanding of justice, merely deepened their sense of grievance and their desire for vengeance. That is why the period of reassessment produced only the willingness to collaborate with the British in establishing a viable state. As soon as this had been done, the Afrikaners were to start all over again on the road to that type of justice that was most in harmony with their genius.

Over the centuries, the temper of the slave owner had undergone three stages of evolution. There had been the era of the wars, when the main purpose was to grab land from the Africans. This process had, as its climax, the establishment of the Union of South Africa. The second phase had been designed to despoil the defeated African of his property and wealth in order to force him out of his reserves to work on the white man's farms, in his industries, and in his homes on conditions that suited the white man best. Hertzog had concentrated his attack on the African's property rights. The third phase came after World War II, when Afrikaner nationalism launched direct attacks on the person of the African to remold his individuality and make him amenable to Afrikaner discipline. The central

idea was always to keep the African in the position of maximum weakness so that the Afrikaner could always remain the master.

The second republic came into being when the temper of the slave owner was in the middle of its third evolutionary phase. In this situation, the Afrikaner nationalists realized that insisting on their type of justice was very much like supping with the devil, but they accepted the full implications of it and used the longest possible spoon. In the last analysis, however, the attack on the person ultimately involves the destruction of a people. There is no halfway house between fulfillment and extinction, between growth and death. Living is a continuous process of unfolding, whether the subject is the individual or the group. To stop this action is to destroy life; to slow it down is to frustrate creation's purpose for man. Gas chambers, pogroms, and possibly concentration camps are the handiest instruments by which a majority seeks to liquidate a minority. The few, however, cannot use these instruments against the many unless they want to release forces among the many that might in the end destroy the few. Survival is too precious to the Afrikaner nationalist to be risked in adventures that might endanger his own existence. As a result, he uses quite a number of techniques to frustrate life's purpose for the African. The end is always the same—to keep the African in the position of permanent weakness in order to preserve the Boer's pattern of justice, to transform him into a pliable tool in the hands of the Afrikaner nationalists. In this chapter, we shall pick only a few techniques at random to show different aspects of the pattern of "just" laws.

Let's take Bantu Education. Its content is designed to wean the African from British influences; although it makes him sufficiently informed to be an efficient servant, it does not train him sufficiently well to compete with the white man as an intellectual equal. Permanent inferiority is the end in view. If this could be achieved, the African would be quite satisfied, the Afrikaner nationalists believe, with being segregated in the reserves as a vassal of the white man. Not poisoned by the fer-

ment that makes the mind seek for a better life, the African would retire to his tribal ways and walk out of the reserves only to serve the white man. Once he had collected a few pounds, he would return to the ways of his ancestors and forget all the silly notions about liberty, human dignity, equality, and the rule of law. The Afrikaner nationalists admit that the African must be civilized, but it must be done the right way, their way. Talk of liberty and similar things is all right for civilized people—in South Africa, the people with a white skin. They claim that the white man came to South Africa on a civilizing mission. Civilizing the African did not, however, mean that the latter should one day want to be the equal of the white man, to marry white women. It meant that he would be helped to develop along his own lines, despite the fact that these had been systematically destroyed by Christianity and the country's industrialization, by the attacks on his property, and by the violence to his being. If his lines were no longer available, it was the duty of the white man to produce new ones for the African. Bantu Education had been evolved to do precisely that.

Ethnic Grouping is another technique. Here the Africans are compelled to regard themselves as members of tribal groups. The Zulus are segregated from the Sutu or the Xosa. Each group must live in its own section of the urban location and have separate schools. The obvious advantage of this arrangement is that it makes it so easy in times of crises to set one group against another and thus keep the Africans from presenting a united front against Afrikaner nationalism.

In and out of the schools, the state goes to great expense in trying to force the African to see in the culture of what was once his tribe the main sources of his inspiration. Personal fulfillment, it is said, is foreign to the African as a source of inspiration, for the tribe does not know what that is. By laying stress on it, the African intellectual betrays his people; he seeks to imitate the whites, and so cuts himself off from his people and makes himself their enemy. According to this view, Pixley Seme, John Dube, Walter Rubusana, or Solomon Plaatje, who taught

their people to look to human values as their source of inspiration, who rejected the tribe as an entity within which individual fulfillment was possible, were the enemies of their people. They imitated the white missionaries who had trained them. The closure of mission schools and the control of all education by the state is meant to realign the process of training the African child and focus his thinking on the things that really endure—the totems that give meaning to tribal life.

This process of spiritual demolition does not recognize the pattern of culture that the African has been evolving since Union, when his various groups were lumped together as one black mass, subjected to the same laws, and forced to live under conditions dictated by the white man. Torn away from their tribes and cultures, despised and hated by the white man, the Africans put their heads together and decided to create for themselves a world after their own design. It was a very unique world, compounding bits and pieces of wisdom, vice, and virtue from the civilizations of the West and the East and combining these with whatever was left of the African's way of life to produce a cultural amalgam unlike anything in the modern world. From these humble beginnings, there evolved a philosophy, a moral dimension, which postulated that real fulfillment for the individual, and therefore the group, lay only in doing those things that raised man's potential. Such a positive philosophy necessarily worked for the continuous enlargement of the human personality, for it was inevitable that in time it would cushion the Africans against the shocks of the temper of the slave owner. It produced leaders who rose above the bitterness, hatred, and indignity into which they had been born, who were ready to make every possible sacrifice to enable their people to lead their country along safer routes to a better future. Of this type are such men as Albert Luthuli, Z. K. Matthews, Z. R. Mahabane, and many others in our own times, including John Dube and his contemporaries, whom I have already mentioned.

The pattern of life that produced these men and others is not understood by the Afrikaner nationalist. And what he

does not understand must be destroyed; even the cultural unity built up at great sacrifice during the last fifty years must be destroyed. Each African must give his first loyalty not to the African group but to his tribe. This is the situation into which the Trekkers walked and which made the defeat of the African peoples possible. If the African does not want to return to that position of weakness, the state arrogates to itself the right to force him back to it under the guise of awakening him to the beauties of his own culture.

On the administrative plane, there are the Bantu Authorities, which have been established in some rural areas. The intention is to have them in the urban locations as well, to preserve the links between the townsmen and their tribes. These authorities are, of course, foreign to the tribal way of life, and those who serve them are carefully screened by government agents. If the state does not like the nominee of the people, he stands no chance of ever sitting on the Bantu Authority. These boards are an innovation that the white man, in his goodness of heart, has invented to give validity to tribal institutions in the modern environment. They are so much in accord with tribal preferences that in Pondoland, where strenuous government efforts were made to introduce them, the Africans, losing their heads and resorting to murder, arson, and the utter defiance of authority, waged a private war against the police to show what a fine thing the Bantu Authority was.

Job Reservation is another useful technique. It sets aside certain jobs to be done by members of one race only. The primary purpose is to prevent the African from infiltrating the higher-paid grades of employment; for if he amasses enough wealth he will augment the numbers of the middle class, which already owns property and seeks fulfillment for its children in professional work and business, and, on the whole, increases the threat to the white man's authority. The other intentions are, first, to limit the country's productive potential in such ways that white security will be able to withstand the shocks it is likely to receive from the boycott campaigns organized against apartheid;

and, second, to limit the number of Africans industry and commerce can absorb so that the farmers may have enough labor. This mass impoverishment of a people already living well below the subsistence level is the sort of thing that does not enable the Dutch Reformed Church, as a Christian community, to see much that is wrong with apartheid.

So much publicity has been given to the pass laws and so much blood shed in the fight against them within the last fifty years that here we need go no further than to record the objections to their being extended to African women. The African objects to the pass laws because they presume that he, his wife, his daughter, his sister, or his mother are criminals until they produce passes to prove that they are not. No other section of the nation is subjected to these indignities. Any African can be stopped at any time at any place by either a policeman, or, for that matter, by any white person, and be asked to produce a pass. The pass might be in a pocket in a coat at home, but the fact that the African forgot to bring it with him proves him a criminal. Second, a woman's pass records details of her life that are intimately personal. These become public property to be examined by any authorized person at any time of the day or night, and it makes her live under the sense of being owned. Third, the fact that any African, white, Indian, or colored male, posing as a policeman, can demand the pass at any place and at any time exposes the African woman to a life in which her virtue and honor become the plaything of any scoundrel.

All these techniques are applied systematically to lower the African's self-respect, to crush his spirit, to make him amenable to the type of discipline Afrikaner nationalism seeks to impose on him, and to keep South Africa safe for the Afrikaner. The system has been perfected for generations, and it now works so thoroughly that there is no escape from it. The African is born into it. The very house in which he lives is built to make him fit into the pattern dictated by the temper of the slave-owner; so are the conditions under which he rents it. His wage

has been carefully adjusted to make him conform. He can't escape it. Wherever he goes, his skin and race tell tales against him—they damn him.

Dr. Leslie Rubin had for many years been a distinguished member of the legal fraternity in Cape Town. He was also one of the most courageous champions of liberty and justice for all South Africans, regardless of race or color. In recognition of this, the Cape Africans elected him to represent them in the all-white Senate. (This was before this form of representation was abolished by the Verwoerd regime.) After many years of unsuccessfully fighting apartheid in the Senate, and after considerable experience in dealing with Africans harassed by pass law persecutions, he wrote a pamphlet in which he gave a condensed but very precise picture of apartheid in legal forms.<sup>1</sup> These are some of his summaries of the position:

An African who was born in a town and lived there continuously for fifty years, but then left to reside elsewhere for any period, even for two weeks, is not entitled, as of right, to return to the town where he was born and to remain there for more than seventy-two hours. If he does, he is guilty of a criminal offence punishable by a fine not exceeding ten pounds or, in default, imprisonment for a period not exceeding two months, unless he has obtained a permit to do so.

An African who has, since birth, resided continuously in a town is not entitled, as of right, to have living with him in that town for more than seventy-two hours, a married daughter, a son who has reached the age of eighteen, a niece, a nephew or a grandchild.

Whenever the Governor-General (who acts on the advice of the Cabinet, which is in turn advised by the Minister of Native Affairs) in his unfettered discretion deems it fit to issue the necessary proclamation, an African who has been required by an Order of Court to leave a certain area must do so, and no Court of law may grant an interdict preventing such removal, nor may appeal to review proceedings, stay, or suspend such removal,

<sup>1</sup> Rubin, *This Is Apartheid* (Gollancz, 1960).

even when it has been established beyond all doubt that the Court Order was intended for some other person and was served upon him in error.

It is unlawful for a White person and a non-White person to sit down to a cup of tea together in a tea room in a town anywhere in South Africa, unless they have obtained a permit to do so.

Unless he has obtained a special permit, an African professor delivering a lecture at a White club, which has invited him to do so, commits a criminal offence.

No African, lawfully residing in a town by virtue of a permit issued to him is entitled, as of right, to have his wife and children residing with him.

One of the most important assessments of apartheid was made in 1960 by the International Commission of Jurists, which sent out an eminent legal observer to report on the extent to which the rule of law is adhered to in South Africa. The Commission concluded thus on apartheid:<sup>2</sup>

As pointed out in the report, rigid racial classification provides the basis upon which all movement and residence of the non-White is controlled and determined according to the labour needs of industry and agriculture. Real freedom of selection and change of employment or improvement of status is virtually non-existent, and collective representation of this massive labour force is strictly limited. Denied the right to vote in general elections or plebiscite, such as the recent determination of the Republic, more than 10,000,000 people are to all intents and purposes precluded from having any effective political voice or organisation. Moreover, the very expression of opposition to or protest against the present policy of apartheid constitutes a criminal offence. The non-White is therefore by law relegated to a permanently unequal status. Perhaps most objected to are the comprehensive requirements that a document of identification, which indicates membership in a less privileged group, must be carried and presented on demand. The Pass Law system has been seen to result in flagrant abuses of the law involving arbitrary arrest and detention and to

<sup>2</sup> International Commission of Jurists, *South Africa and the Rule of Law*, Geneva, 1960.

create a situation in which certain aspects can be described only as legalised slavery. No less disturbing are the negation of social rights, of free choice of marriage or religious worship, restriction of assembly and, to many, the irritant of the liquor prohibition. Finally, completing and assuring the continuation of the policy of inequality is a carefully supervised educational system whereby non-Whites are to receive instruction solely in preparation for their acceptance of an inferior social, economic and political status. Such a discriminatory policy is not only contrary to generally accepted concepts of justice and principles of human rights, but also creates a potentially explosive situation which might soon lead to even more widespread internal violence than has already been experienced.

This, then, is the pattern of the "just" laws Piet Retief and his Trekker contemporaries left the Cape to enact.

The origins, history, and content of apartheid, or the temper of the slave owner, are such that with the best will in the world, it is incapable of being just. The fundamentalist approach, the tradition of absolutism, the effects of slavery on the thinking of the Afrikaner nationalist, and historical experiences—all combine to give it the character of a ruthless, immoral, and dehumanizing ideology, which can never be modified by appeals to reason.

The dualistic morality it has evolved over the centuries is, in Bantu Education and university segregation, reaching points where it denies the African the right to have access to the truth. It has to distort the growth and development of the African's personality or be destroyed. It has to make the honor of the African woman the plaything of scoundrels, in order to justify itself. It has to destroy the tradition of scholarship built up at Fort Hare University College and persecute men like Professor Matthews in order to delay its being debunked. It has to stop nursing services in many African schools, where disease and malnutrition are rife because of the parents' poverty. It has to prescribe that the African child who fails his second standard twice must be thrown out of school to swell the ranks of the

half-educated, who are fit only to be farm laborers. Apartheid has got to do all these things—to maintain "proper relations between master and servant"—so that the supremacy of the Afrikaner will not be endangered.

At the same time, there is an element of tragedy in all this. The history of the Afrikaner people proves clearly that they love South Africa with a passion unsurpassed in any community. Their literature and their behavior all point in this direction. Yet they have committed themselves to an outlook on life that will exorcise precisely those forces which could one day drive them out of South Africa and undo much of the good work they have done. For, by arrogating to itself the right to impose its will on all ethnic and cultural groups; by pursuing immoral policies that conflict with the basic tenets of the civilization it claims to uphold; by acting as though survival for the Afrikaner people were conditional upon the ruin of the other groups; and by using race and blood as the main criteria by which to fix the position of the individual in the life of the nation—by these means, apartheid sets a ceiling beyond which the individual is not free to develop his personality if he is not white.

This frustrates life's purpose for the individual human being and condemns millions of men, women, and children to incapable poverty, hunger, disease, and humiliation when all they want is a chance to make better use of their lives.

Apartheid's errors transform divergences of opinion, which should be normal in a free society, into fundamental differences on almost every plane. They create contradictions in the country's economy and retard real progress. The checks and balances that give viability to democratic societies are destroyed, while treason, rebellion, and civil war are upheld as the only means by which to effect reforms. Social coherence and economic stability are undermined. Force increasingly becomes the only instrument by which to preserve order. Tyranny develops, and the democratic tradition is smothered out of existence.

Finally, the doctrine that each race has an innate or historical will of its own, which drives it inexorably to its destiny, stim-

ulates the growth of a multiplicity of wills. Fulfillment for all the peoples of South Africa is said to lie in the jungle of wills thus produced. This ignores what is obvious from the evidence of history—that the final outcome of all this in a mixed society can only be the disruption of the republic. It is toward this very disaster that apartheid is driving South Africa.

PART

## II

### TWO MOODS OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM

JABAVU LEADER OF THIS GROUP.

① JOHN TENGO JABAVU, / MVO ZABANTUNDU,  
AFRICAN SUPPORTER OF CAPE LIBERALISM,  
OPPOSED THE LESSENING OF AFRICAN  
RIGHTS: IF UNION STATE RIGHTS OF  
CITIZENSHIP TO ALL MEN IT WOULD BE  
WELCOME: IF IT REVERTED TO PRE-  
CAPE FRANCHISE → JABAVU  
OPPOSED IT.

- JABAVU BELONGED TO A NEW  
CULTURAL CLASS IN THE  
AFRICAN COMMUNITY: EMOTIONALLY JABAVU  
& INTELLECTUALLY NO LONGER  
IDENTIFIED WITH TRIBE.  
- BELIEVED IN BONDS OF UNITY  
THAT WOULD TRANSCEND RACE,  
GIVING MOVEMENT TOWARDS  
EXTENSION OF THE AREA  
OF LIBERTY.

### 8 • A BLACK UNITED FRONT

THREE DISTINCT FORMS OF ATTITUDES OF AFRICANS  
TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF THE  
UNION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

By 1908, African attitudes toward the formation of the Union of South Africa had crystallized into three distinct forms. In the Cape, John Tengo Jabavu, who owned and edited *Imvo Zabantsundu* and who had long been the main African supporter of Cape liberalism, was critical of any whittling down of African rights. If the Union could be an organic whole within which citizenship would be the same for all men, it would be a welcome development. If, on the other hand, it would lead to the demotion of the African to the position he held before the introduction of the franchise into the Cape, it would be a backward step.

BRILLIANT OBSERVATIONS.

As we recede farther from his times, it becomes possible for us to view Jabavu's position with a greater degree of objectivity. When Dr. Philip segregated the converted Africans and made them live in mission stations, he was merely acknowledging the fact that a new cultural class had emerged in the African community, one which was emotionally and intellectually no longer responsive to the call of the tribe. These people were committed to values of life they regarded as having a greater validity than the ideals that held the tribe together. They believed these to constitute bonds of unity that would transcend race and could guide movement toward the extension of the area of liberty. In a sense, Jabavu was the advanced spokesman of this group.







the grace of the government, they frowned on courses likely to complicate things for them. In between the two wings of his following, Seme had a band of very able men, of whom the shrewdest was probably Solomon Plaatje—about whom more later.

The third school of thought, the remnants of Bambada's supporters, saw in the Union an unmitigated evil—the entrenchment of white domination. They believed that since the African had lost his freedom and his land on the battlefield, that was where he must recover them. Their original leader, Bambada, had been a very remarkable man, a Zulu chief who had risen against the British Government in Natal during the first decade of the twentieth century in protest of the poll tax. He had collected a band of armed men around him and had led them in an armed march to clear the whites out of Natal, for he refused to pay taxes to a government not his own. Superior arms broke his resistance; he was caught and hanged by the British. Thereafter, his followers were not in position to influence events in the African community when the Union was formed.

Most Africans in the four provinces supported Seme's line of thinking. As a result, he called a conference of African chiefs, clergymen, leaders, and representative personalities from every walk of life and every lingual group to agree on how best to create the world after their design as a condition of survival where the temper of the slave owner was the dominant influence. The conference met in Bloemfontein in January, 1912, and the event is as important to the African community as the Great Trek is to the Afrikaners. The task of the delegates was a complex and delicate one, since tribal loyalties and suspicions were still strong. Nearly all the major groups were fresh from the period of turbulence when they had fought each other fiercely. To keep the delegates on the subject they had gathered to discuss required supreme gifts of statesmanship.

Seme and his colleagues, however, rose to the occasion. They argued that the whites had established their own united front to keep the African a beggar in his own land. But the African

REBELLION?  
BAMBADA

\*\*\* THE IMPORTANT TO AFRICANS AT THE GREAT TREK TO AFRICANERS.  
\* THE FORMATION OF A.N.C. IN 1912.

\*\*\* SUPPORTED SEME'S LINE OF THINKING.  
MOST AFRICANS IN THE FOUR PROVINCES

\*\*\* THE AND CONFERENCE: THIS MEETING OF THE AFRICAN LEADERS

AFRICAN WOULD BE BETTER WOULD MAKE WHITE UNITY

\*\*\* NUMBERS WOULD ESSENTIALLY ENABLE AFRICANS TO RULE THE LAND. A BLACK UNITED FRONT 73

was not as weak as many thought he was. He had on his side the advantage of numbers, and just as this advantage had enabled the Boers to become an important factor in the first Union government, so the numbers of the Africans would one day create a situation where the Africans would become the rulers of their land. White unity could be effective only to the extent that the Africans allowed it to be. If the Africans stood firmly by each other, white unity would crack; if they wavered, it would be reinforced. There was no such thing as white good will; what the white man respected was power. If the African wanted to be free, he had to set his mind on building up the power of the group. True, he needed time to do that; but if he set about it with a will, victory was bound to be his. One day his unity would be irresistible; then, it would sweep away white domination. \*\*\*QUOTE THIS BRILLIANT OBSERVATION

After lengthy and careful deliberation, the delegates agreed to unite their peoples for the purpose of projecting them into the future as a new politico-cultural community. They were no longer to be narrowly Zulu or Xosa or Sutu; they were going to be the African people. Their unity was designed to extend the area of liberty; to give to citizenship the same meaning on both sides of the color line, and not to drive the Indian, colored, or white man into the sea. Thirdly, the delegates regarded the violation of human rights by the Union Government's race policy as a matter that concerned humanity as a whole. They rejected the contention that it was a domestic South African matter. \*EXTENDING THE AREA OF LIBERTY

The most remarkable thing about the black and white united fronts was the difference in the bases on which they were established. The white front had been built on the principle that white supremacy was the main condition of survival for the peoples from Europe and of security for the others. The Constitution of the Union of South Africa had made this clear beyond all doubt. In other words, the white front saw men and events from the group perspective. The African front, on the other hand, was based on the principle that values of life with

\*\*\* WHITE UNITY ONLY POSSIBLE IF AFRICANS ALLOWED IT TO HAPPEN.  
\*\*\* UNITING PEOPLE IN ORDER TO PROTECT THEM IN TO THE FUTURE.

\*\*\* USE DOCUMENTS OF SEME + REFER BRING TO SUPPORT THIS THESE.

\*\* RACE AND HONOR OF IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUAL PEOPLE

\* VALUES OF LIFE AT STAKE IN THE RACE CRISIS

a similar meaning on both sides of the racial line were more reliable bonds of national unity and provided better guarantees of security for the individual and survival for the group than race or blood. The emphasis was on the value of the individual.

The polarization of outlooks expressed here marked an important turning point in South Africa's development. In so far as the Africans were concerned, race was no longer to be a factor of significance in assessing the worth of a person. Values of life were going to be the issue at stake in the race crisis. The white person who upheld the ideals for which the Africans fought was a friend, one of them. The African who supported race segregation (and, later, apartheid) was an enemy. His race was no longer to be of any consequence.

The other significant point about the Bloemfontein agreement was the series of compromises that made unity possible. Each tribal group surrendered its right to sovereignty on the return of freedom. They accepted the principle of equality. No group was to be more important than the others. Policies that could upset the balances holding the front together were avoided. This was conducive to moderation.

So keen were the delegates to preserve and protect this unity that even in their attitude toward the whites they pursued the course of moderation. They set themselves the goal of extending the area of liberty—a deliberate vagueness designed to minimize the strains on the newly achieved unity. Some delegates wanted the new community to call itself African. The others feared that this might be regarded by the Afrikaners as provocation; they might use it as an excuse for destroying African unity. Finally, the delegates agreed to use the word *Native* in order not to make too many enemies for themselves at the time.

Dube's dictum about *amanzi*, which the delegates accepted as the cornerstone of their policy when they elected him the first president of the organization they founded to perpetuate their ideals, was clearly designed to define the ultimate goal and to buy time to build up reserves of power for the final showdown. After the delegates had deliberated on the principle,

form, and application of unity in practice, they resolved to establish the South African Native National Congress, later the African National Congress (ANC), to perpetuate the ideals they had agreed upon.

Before we study the methods the Congress was to use in the fight against race oppression, it might shed more light on present African attitudes to consider the background of the men who molded opinion at this critical moment in their people's history. I had the good fortune to work in closest collaboration with Dr. John L. Dube for a long time, and at the same time I had the honor of seeing develop between Dr. Seme and me a friendship that lasted until his death. As a journalist, I met and often worked with most of the men who had laid the foundations for African unity; I was in a unique position to appreciate the spirit of the times and the motivating urges that determined their actions from situation to situation.

Nearly all the men who met at Bloemfontein in 1912 had lived through one phase or another of the turbulence that rocked South Africa during the greater part of the nineteenth century. They had either known or seen defeat, and their own lives had been affected by this fact. Most of them had probably been born into sovereign, independent African states, in which the dominant tradition was the continuous two-way flow of power from the *ibandla* (assembly of arms-bearing citizens) to the citizen, and from him upwards. This had preserved the balance between the interests of the citizen and those of the state. The consequent equilibrium had given to citizenship a meaning that was the exact opposite of that advocated by the Afrikaners for the African.

Life in these states had been dominated by a religious system that regarded each individual personality as sacred. Way back in infinity, long before there was the sun or the moon or the stars or the earth, there was *Mvelinqangi* (the First-to-appear), who was neither matter nor visible. He could not be seen by the naked eye because the subtle substance that constituted his body stretched from infinity to infinity. He was eternal and

creative; he was the ultimate reality from which all things were to derive their being. He willed that there should be the sun and the other planets; that there should be man, animals, birds, stones, and trees. All were manifestations of his infinite form. Inside his being was an infinity of specialized forms making up a part of the whole. These were the spirits of living things, some of which had human forms. When they were clothed in flesh, they became the human beings who inhabited the earth.

Each human being was made up of three elements—the *Mvelinqangi* essence, the spirit form, and the physical body. The human always had a dual existence. When he lived, it was in the spiritual and physical worlds. At death, he did not “die”; he merely discarded the physical body and returned to his ancestors, the spirit forms. His age, sex, or position did not affect his nature or his cycle of life. As a future spirit form or *idlozi*, the individual personality had a sacredness that was absolute and immutable. He was the individualized essence of *Mvelinqangi*. The concept of equality in the African community was based on this evaluation of the human personality.

From such an evaluation sprang an important ethical code, which prescribed that the good life was the one in which individuality was treated with reverence and consideration. The most heinous crime in the Zulu state, for example, was witchcraft, not murder. Zulu law took the attitude that in murder the criminal merely separated body and soul; in witchcraft, the miscreant interfered with the most sacred ingredient in the human makeup. Supreme virtue lay in being humane, in accepting the human being as a part of yourself, with a right to be denied nothing that you possessed. It was inhuman to drive the hungry stranger from your door, for your neighbor's sorrow was yours. This code constituted a philosophy of life, and the great Sutu-nguni family (Bantu has political connotations that the Africans resent) called it, significantly, *ubuntu* or *botho*—pronounced *butu*—the practice of being humane. The harshest judgment that the humblest African in the Sutu-nguni community can make of his neighbor is to say that he is not humane. The nearest equivalent

to this value judgment in the West is to say a person is not civilized or morally developed.

This philosophy gave content to life in the Sutu-nguni states before the advent of the white man. Defeat shattered the political and social institutions that gave visible expression to this attitude. Disaster could not, however, penetrate so deeply into the African's being as to destroy those things he prized most—the perspectives from which he viewed life and which gave it meaning. These remained deep in his self, giving him spiritual sustenance in moments of trial. He has always clung to them with a determination that nothing seems capable of cracking.

Christianity took deep root in the Sutu-nguni community not because it came with the conquering white man, not even because it produced genuinely good men like Philip, but because its evaluation of the human personality was to a very large extent in accord with that of the *botho* way of life. Christianity was readily acceptable because it gave valid interpretation and meaning to the *botho* evaluation of the human personality in the complex fabric of society created by the white man; it showed how the individual could try to be better—how he could be humane amidst the conflicts and complex situations which were part and parcel of the life imposed on the African by the white conqueror. This acceptance meant the blending of humanistic responses evolved in different situations. The result was the enlargement of the African's personality, leading to the development of one of the most remarkable characteristics of his nationalism—its strongly humanistic bias.

Anthropologists whose thinking was orientated in the direction of the white settler communities have described the mode of living based on the *botho* principle as being built on the ideal of sharing. To the Sutu-nguni who upholds the *botho* doctrine, the most important thing in life is to recognize the fact that he has no right to anything that might be denied to his neighbor. Although every human being has an equal right to the fruits of the earth, the recognition of this right is quite a different thing from sharing.

The refusal to abandon the great humanistic principle was not a new development. In the great migrations from the north to the south, the Sutu-nguni had lost every material possession in the tropical jungle, but he had not parted with the *botho* doctrine, no matter what happened. Life itself had been threatened so seriously at every stage that the miracle is how such large masses of men and women ever got through the thick forests to establish settled communities and reconstruct their civilizations in the south. In these great movements, the individual had always been exposed to the deadly conspiracy of disease, wild animals, and a hostile climate. The battle for survival had made him realize that in the final analysis the individual's best friend was the other individual. Suffering and danger had been common to all, and this had enhanced the individual's appreciation of the other's potential for giving help in the battle for survival.

Slavery had produced its own complications. By making direct and savage attacks on his being, it stimulated a deeper appreciation of individuality. The centuries of humiliation and oppression awakened in the African a moral dimension that was repulsed by those things which debased man's personality. It drove him to seek his highest fulfillment in whatever raised man's potential to be better. Since he had reached the very nadir of suffering and yet survived, he had had the physical experience of the reality beyond, the indefinable experience that made him lose all fear of pain, made humiliation virtually meaningless, and enabled him to be at peace in the whole of creation. This inner peace, which was basically of the spirit, he translated into his capacity to laugh even when in travail; into his music and art, which are vibrant with life, even though he is in chains. He expressed it in what a famous Japanese called "enduring the unendurable." Yet there is nothing unique or mystical about this dimension, for it lies dormant in every human being. Human groups need to be exposed to certain experiences before it is awakened; but its main distinguishing feature at all times is that it works continuously for the enlargement of the human personality, almost instinctively compelling man to strive toward those things which raise his potential to be better.

Another important factor in the background of the men under discussion was that the African's nation-states in southern Africa had sprung out of diverse peoples. Moshoeshoe, who was almost the last of the great nation-builders, provides a good example. He collected fleeing Zulus, Ndebeles, Batlaping, and others and gave them all a political loyalty that was valid in their lives because it guaranteed survival. Whoever embraced the loyalty was welcome because his coming to the group meant an accretion of strength. In this situation, there could be no room for xenophobia or discrimination based on language or race. To be a Zulu, Xosa, or Sutu was not a question of race or color; it was one of cultural preference and political allegiance or choice. Coenraad du Buys, Christoffel Botha, and Coenraad Bezuidenhout among the Xosas, John Dunn, Ogle, and others among the Zulus were white men who had, after indicating their political and cultural preferences, been accorded citizenship rights in the African states.

Christianity played no insignificant part in molding the attitudes of men like Seme and Dube. With the exception of Bambada, who was a pagan, the leaders of the new awakening were, for the most part, the products of mission schools. They were influenced heavily by the thinking and actions of men like Dr. Philip and his successors in the fight against race oppression. To Tengo Jabavu, for example, moral values were not things to talk about only on Sundays. Since Dr. Philip had shown that they could bring about reforms where nothing else could, liberalism had grown out of this proof of effectiveness. Jabavu looked forward to an extension of the area of coordinated black and white initiatives. So deeply did he feel about this that when his fellow Africans, under Seme's leadership, waxed enthusiastic about the Bloemfontein Conference, he entertained grave misgivings, fearing that the proposed front would be an African lapse into racial fundamentalism—the sort of thing that would destroy the coordination of the power reserves by which he set so much store. He was still impressed with the way in which the Cape liberals had fought for the retention of the Cape African vote after Union.